

## The Dryland Blues

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Blues influence has gone in many directions during its century. In this selection, in addition to the basic twelve-bar structure, we've seen a couple of ragtime progressions and a waltz. There are also jazz blues, rock blues, Cajun blues, and who knows what else? Alberta's fine poet and essayist Sid Marty is also a splendid songwriter and deserves wider notice for his abilities. Prominent among the influences on his singing and

writing is the Greenwich Village troubadour of the mid-60s, Fred Neil. (Whatever happened to him, anyway?) I'd long spotted the Neil influence on this song, and it was only when I heard Sid singing it in concert last year that I realized that the "blues" in the title was as much musical as it was emotional. It's smooth, minor-keyed, and a little bit jazzy, but it's a blues, all right. Try it for yourself!

Am D Am D Am

Verse:

Lis-ten to the lit-tle saw-what in the es - pen trees All night long  
Lis-ten to the chorus frog singing how the pond is turning dry All night long

D Am D F G

he's play-ing on his hol-low drum for me But he can't make me fret at  
com-plain-ing in a lull, lul - la - by But that won't make me weep I've

Em 1. Am D Am D 2. Am D

least not yet, an - y - way they've all gone dry  
got no tears

Am D Dm G Dm G

Bridge: But when the night-hawk sobs how her nest is robbed

C Am C Am C Am

robbed be-cause the rain nev-er comes this way, well that's just the eas-y part

C Am C Am Dm E7 (no chord)

One chor-us from the heart Just the be - gin - ing of the dry - land

Am D Am D

blues

Listen to the little saw-what in the Aspen trees.  
All night long he's playing on his hollow drum for me.  
But he can't make me fret,  
at least not yet, anyway.

Listen to the chorus frogs singin' how the pond is turning dry.  
All night long complaining in a lull, lullaby.  
But that won't make me weep  
I've got no tears; they've all gone dry.

But when the nighthawk sobs how her nest is robbed,  
Robbed because the rain never comes this way, well,  
That's just the easy part,  
One chorus from the heart,  
Just the beginning  
Of the dryland blues.

Now I'm sittin' starin' at the moon through a bottle of booze.  
It's another dewless night, honey, without you.  
Thinkin' in cliches  
Helps me to keep the fear away.

[Bridge]  
Because the earth's in pain, it'll take a year of rain  
To wash the hurt away, to bring you home to stay.  
But that's just the easy part,  
One chorus from the heart,  
Just the beginning  
Of the dryland blues.